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Lebas was Descamps, the author of "The Lives of Flemish Painters." A confidant of the domestic quarrels, he was always the means of making peace in the family. Our readers should peruse in the Memoirs of M. Hecquet, already alluded to, the acts and deeds of this jealous husband, who had no excuse to be so; and, above all, a certain adventure which amused the pupils of Lebas for a very long time. Uneasy about some of his wife's walks and journeys in the town, our French husband rushed one day out into the street, called a cab, and dashed after his wife in his morning costume, which was none of the most complete. The cab, instead of following the carriage in which Madame was, followed another, which was taking a worthy abbé to the Marais. The coach stopped, the abbé got out, the jealous husband rushed furiously into the house which he believed his wife to have entered, abused the *concierge*, made a horrible noise, called for his wife, burst open a door and fell upon the unfortunate abbé, who, seeing the angry artist in a very simple *négligé*, burst out laughing in his face.

The admirable woman and devoted wife, Madame Lebas, died in 1781. Her husband, who was then seventy-four years of age, was profoundly affected by her death. At an age when one wants repose, he for the first time felt annoyances, afflictions, discouragements, and distress. His undertaking, the figures of "The History of France," which required considerable advances of money, had placed him in great pecuniary difficulties. The wilful slowness of Moreau the younger, with whom he was on cold terms, in giving him drawings for this work, which was brought down only to Louis IX.; the necessity he was under of leaving the house where his wife had just died, after living there forty-five years; all combined to overthrow the courageous old man, and he died. This event took place in 1783, just as it became evident that his "History of France" was a great success.

Amid all the annoyances of his last days, he still had some remnant of his old fun and humour. "In 1782," says Hecquet, "we were at the Trianon. We were in the apartment of Madame the Princess of Montbazou, whose windows opened upon a little garden with water and fountains, where the dauphin was walking, or rather carried about, by his attendants. The little prince having stopped before the window, Lebas began, by making faces, swelling out his cheeks, and striking them with his hands, to make the child laugh. It was hinted to him that these demonstrations were not respectful, considering the rank of the child! Lebas immediately checked himself, and, turning round, addressed the heir-presumptive to the throne, who was but one year old: 'I am Jacques Philippe Lebas, engraver and pensioner of your grandfather. I am delighted to have been the means of making his grandson laugh.' More natural than those who were silly enough to take him away from the contamination of laughter, the child showed, by its cries and lamentations, its regret at being taken away from such joyous company!"

On the 9th Thermidor, in the year IV. (1796), the National Library purchased the collection of the works of Lebas, made by Hecquet, for the sum of £120. It is a very valuable part of the riches of that great and admirable institution, which, with many defects, is so superior in many other things to the British Museum. We have the more readily told the story of Lebas's life—he whose name is put to so many engravings with which connoisseurs are familiar—because his life has scarcely ever been written. In fact, the materials have only recently been discovered to exist, since the revolution of 1848, when some of the eminent literary men who took a part in that demonstration obtained access to certain of the archives which had been buried and lost to the world from the carelessness and negligence of certain parties. Bryan says of him: "A celebrated French engraver, who has left a considerable number of pieces, executed in an excellent manner. He was born at Paris in 1708, was instructed in the art of engraving by N. Tardieu, and was one of the most ingenious artists of his time. He excelled in landscapes and small figures, which he touched with infinite spirit and neatness. He availed himself much of the freedom and facility of etching, which he harmonised in an admirable manner with the graver and dry point. The popularity of his works procured him a number of scholars, whose talents were employed in advancing the plates which he afterwards finished and published

with his name. His prints after Teniers are more than a hundred."

He was a very great man in his way, and deserves a niche amid the many who have a claim to a place in the wide world-history of art, which is of all countries, even more than literature, because art requires no translation. The eyes and the heart are alone required for us to comprehend and feel its beauties. It is an excellent and notable sign of the times that art is understood and appreciated."

## A PICTURE.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

Rome, June, 1854.

DURING my residence in this city, about which cling such memories of the past—memories of conquest, of war, of terrible struggles for the world's mastery—and which is yet the centre of so much that is important, I have become acquainted with very many facts which, if all recorded, would be worthy of a volume. I am fond of wandering about into the darker alleys of this "city of the soul," this "mother of dead empires," this "Niobe of nations," which stands

"Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;"

and, though glad at times to mix with the gay throng that crowded the halls of princes, prelates, and bankers, I have sought, according to my usual characteristics, as much as possible to initiate myself into the mysteries of humble life. I have never neglected art, that study which, of all others, repays so well the labour and time bestowed on it; and though I have not, with Coleridge, experienced "an acute feeling of pain on beholding the frescoes of Raphael and Michael Angelo," because they owe their preservation solely to the durable material on which they are painted, I have studied them with earnest love. In fact, my days have been spent, and would be still, but that I am about to leave for Florence, in marvelling at the beauties of painting and sculpture I see around me—my evenings in wandering in Rome and the outskirts in search of studies of manners. I aim, in my artistic productions, at the style of Ostade or Cuyp, rather than that of our Titian. It was in consequence of this feeling of mine that I met with an adventure which I purpose recording at a future time on my canvas—the more, that it has a connexion with a countryman, and is, therefore, interesting.

I had extended my walk to some distance one evening. The night came on suddenly while I was wrapped in contemplation; and, turning round, I scarcely knew where I was. I saw distinctly before me the ruins of an old tower, which told me about what distance I was from Rome; and yet I felt little certainty of finding my way. I was not sufficiently familiar with the road to trust to myself as a guide; but after a few minutes' hesitation I set off, as I thought, along the path which I had followed in the light. In ten minutes I had lost my way. I could speak Italian, and could have asked the road, but there was nobody to ask. This made me reflect on the sage remark, that a man may be a fool in many languages, and I said many things to myself which were of a nature scarcely worthy remembering. I endeavoured to persuade myself that I was on the right road, but it was of no avail; so at last I stood still and looked around. I was near a ruin, whose

"Broken arches, black as night,"

just allowed a glimmer of departed day to peer through them, and show me a little of the scene around.

I soon found that I was also near a little stream, as I heard, not by the roar of waters from the headlong height, but by the gentle rippling of the tiny waves. I began to suspect that I really did not know where I was. I stood still. The scene was new to me; and yet, at sight of that pile of ages long ago, as the light began to stream from star and planet on oriel, buttress, and scroll, I suspected I had seen the place before from a distance. My eyes began to accustom themselves to the gloom, and presently I distinctly saw a kind of rude hut, such as are commonly built in out-of-the-way places by Roman peasants.

I at once felt fatigue. Before I had never thought of it, but now hunger, thirst, and weariness, came all upon me at once.

The hut was below me in a kind of hole, and I had to descend some rude steps to this dwelling, perhaps purposely concealed, for what I knew, and I conjectured hardly safe for any one who had with him ought to lose. But I had nothing to lose, and on that score was easy. My dress was plain. I wore a blouse and cap, and my shoes were heavy and rudely fashioned. Still I clutched my stick as I turned to the hut, and approached a side whence came a light.

"Is there any one at home?" said I, in a loud and, I hope, cheerful tone.

"Si, signor," cried a rough and rather harsh voice. "What do you want? Who are you?"

"I am hungry, tired, and thirsty; and I am an American traveller and artist, studying nature, who has lost his way."

There was a dead silence for a moment—a silence I could feel, but not understand.

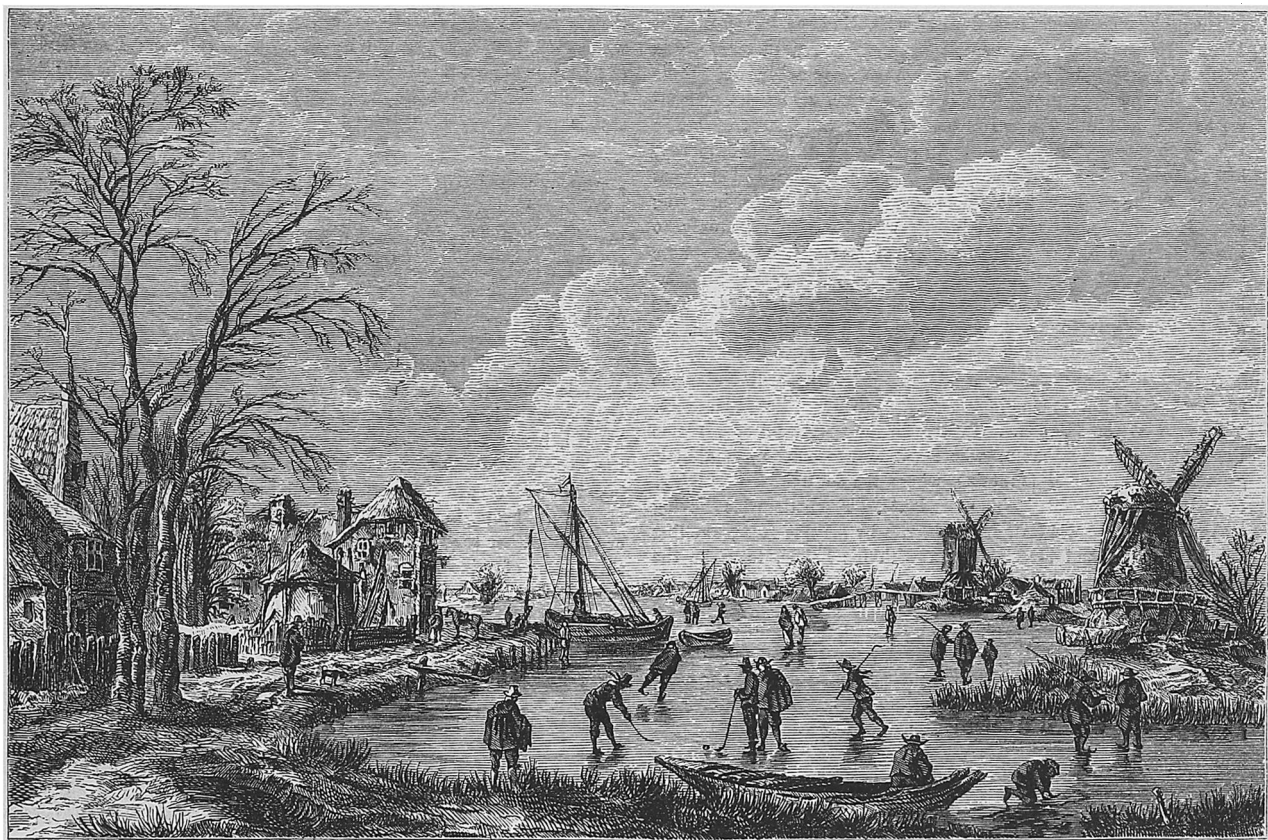
head, and altogether a pretty simple face that might have been little noticed but for her eyes. They were of that deep, dreamy cast which strikes the painter because they tell a tale of sorrow, or regret, or hope; at all events, always indicate some passion which it is useful for him to study.

My attention, however, was called away by my supper, of which I partook freely; all the while, however, casting glances towards the young woman, who was absorbed, I began to fancy, by some memory of the past.

"You seem partial to Americans," I said at last, addressing the old man.

"We have no cause to be," grumbled he in a half good-natured tone.

"Hush!" said the girl, rising and standing erect, her right hand held out;—this is the instant I hope to seize in my picture—"hush, father! Do you not remember it was thus *he* came?"



THE SKATERS.—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER NEER.

"Welcome!" then exclaimed a voice—a voice of touching sadness and melancholy. "Welcome, stranger: no American was ever turned from this door."

I was, I confess, a little startled by this reply, but certainly more gratified than startled; and I advanced to the open door and entered the hut. It was only a hut, a poor, mean building with one room, as I at first thought, and three occupants. There was an aged pair, still active and healthy, in the dress of peasants, and a young woman, not far from thirty, of handsome, yet melancholy mien, on whom my eyes were the more fixed, that she examined me with a curiosity and anxiety quite painful to behold. She then sat down by a table, and gazed with a vacant look at the wall, as I thought, it being dark, and the place illumined faintly by a sorry lamp.

The old people gave me a stool, and I had leisure to examine the young woman while they prepared a frugal meal of bread and cheese and wine, with some grapes, always welcome. She was dark, with black hair, black eyes, a small but well-shaped fore-

It was a dark and gloomy night, and he had lost his way; do you not remember?"

"Well, *carissima*, I think I should remember it," replied the father.

"To what does your daughter allude?" said I; "if I may be so indiscreet as to ask."

The young woman seized the lamp, and holding it close to the wall, bade me look. I rose quickly and gazed at the place on the wall indicated by her, and there I saw, to my utter amazement, a delicious little oil painting, representing a young man of fair and delicate features, beside a dark-eyed beauty, which I easily recognised as the holder of the lamp in her younger days. It was a perfect little gem, and astonished me so much I could not at first speak; but presently the peasant girl calming down, I resumed my seat and entered into conversation with her. And she told me her story, I suppose, because my lips had imparted to her the secret of my birth in the land of his origin.

It was about ten years before that a youthful traveller lost his

way under somewhat similar circumstances to my own, and sought shelter in the same hut, where then dwelt Francisca Patrana and her parents. He was a gentle but enthusiastic youth, who felt grateful at once for the hospitality offered and accepted. He spent the evening in conversation, chiefly with the young girl, and went away next day, promising to return. He did return, though they did not expect it, and so often that it soon became clear he was smitten with the charms of the young girl. His visits were discouraged. He cared not. He painted the hut at first, and then, after some coaxing, the young girl, who began to take a deep interest in him.

At last he offered his hand and his heart. A romantic and fervent spirit, he knew only that she was beautiful and good. She was uneducated, but that was a delightful thing for young love to remedy. He was refused at first, because of the difference of religion; but his earnest and sincere eloquence overcame all difficulties, and it was finally settled that the whole party should at an

them, and not a single stumbling-block stood in the way of their great happiness. How she longed to see the happy land he painted in such glowing colours! and how he too desired, with pride and joy, to be the being who should open up to her its beauties and its new graces!

To marry in Rome was difficult, if not impossible. Every preparation was then made for their departure. At last the letter came, and all was ready. Just then he died. He was of a delicate, frail nature, and caught a fever, against which youth laboured in vain. He died, and left behind him one who, though not his widow, because she had not been his wife, yet was determined to be in everything his relict on this earth. She saw him to his lonely grave, and returned to her hut saddened, blighted, hopeless, and yet—for he had conquered all her prejudices—hopeful of another world, where they must meet again.

She kept his picture, *that one*, and the lesson-books he had given her; but she touched them no more; the chord was snapped that



A SEA-PIECE.—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DER NEER.

early period emigrate to America, and there the young couple should be united. The old people heard the plan at length with complacency, and the youthful artist wrote over to his home for money to return.

All went well. He painted and taught. The young girl was apt and willing, and she learnt to read and write, and imbibed much knowledge from her enthusiastic lover. His studies were now confined to nature. He was always near the ruin, and it was in the hut in which I was listening to the tale that he painted his picture, which gave unbounded delight to all parties. And there it was, too, that she coned over her books, her grammar, and her little elementary works—a very school-girl in earnestness and devotion.

And he was never tired of teaching, nor she of learning. It must have been a pleasant and cheerful thing to see that couple, so attached, so earnest, so single-minded, pursuing their mutual tasks; he, yearning and battling for fame, she, for simple knowledge. And the time passed so pleasantly all the while, for all smiled on

made them musical. And yet I saw with what veneration she still regarded them. All efforts to make her change, to induce her to wed, were useless; she was the bride of the departed, and as such she solemnly announced herself to her parents. They combated her will in vain. She would not be comforted, and would not be left.

And thus I found her and a subject for my pencil, which, if I can ever realise, I am sure will place my name in some little niche where the smaller specimens of art may find shelter. And there I left her next day, much moved by meeting with one to whom she could speak unreservedly of the lover who had been dead ten years, and yet whom she looked on with such freshness of memory. I saw her no more, my stay in Rome being but short; but I write this hurried letter to record the deep impression the scene made on me.

Perhaps I should have rather told of the seven-hilled city's pride, of what remains besides the cypress and the owl, of broken thrones and temples; but thus is it ever with me; one little bit of nature

makes me forget all the glories of the greatest art, because it moves my heart. Not that I despise the mighty monuments of times past, but that real life moves me more deeply when it presents itself to me in such a form, and especially—egotist that I am!—when it comes wrapped round in the enchanting witchery of a subject for a picture.

## AN ARTIST'S IDEA OF CONSTANTINOPLE AND ENVIRONS.

THE East has always been the peculiar ground of the artist. Thence he has drawn his most rich materials. Martin, and Turner, and many others have made us familiar with much that is great and splendid in the fields and hills of Orient, now to be made further familiar as the scene of military operations. It is pleasing, however, to turn from the terrible stories of "our own correspondent," narrating all the horrors of war, starvation, and cholera, to the views of an artist. Mr. F. Hervé visited the land some time back as a portrait painter, and brought back, not only rich sketches of the country, but communicated much pleasing information.

He visits the place to paint; and hence it is natural that he should tell us, that though there are few spots in Europe which have called forth more panegyrics than the charms of the Bosphorus, yet the reality far surpasses all preconceived ideas. The position, the very sensation that you are between the extreme points of the great divisions of the globe known as Asia and Europe, is enough to rouse the mind to a certain degree of enthusiasm. It is hard to say on which side most beauty lies.

You gaze on palaces of the purest white marble, with doors of bronze and gilded cornices, tall minarets, rising with chaste and taper elegance beside the round and massive tower, light trellises, shaded terraces, latticed windows, all savouring of mystery and romance. Then you turn from the present to the past, as your eye catches a sight of the heavy castles of other times, with their gloomy turrets frowning on each other from the opposite banks as they peer up in solitary grandeur—here a fantastic and ephemeral style of architecture, there a heavy massive line of solid walls and lofty towers, which raise their proud heads on high.

Every form of habitation is to be found in the Bosphorus, from the habitation of the peasant to the palace of the monarch. There is the lowly fisherman's shed, formed of a few planks, pitched up and plastered together with mud and clay, with a hole to creep in and a hole to look out from, the waves oft dashing against its base, and the rain entering its roof; whilst not far off stands the Sultan's gorgeous palace, where the sculptor's art is profusely displayed, where gaudy painting and the richest carved work unite their powers to adorn the splendid monument of Ottoman pride, and its polished marble walls, its granite balustrades, its porphyry columns, are crowned by a resplendent crescent of gold. All this may outrage the pure and classic eye of the chaste architect, for we know that it is in bad taste; but the effect is most brilliant and imposing; and as there is a succession of these palaces on either shore, when the sun shines upon them, it produces one dazzling blaze of eastern magnificence.

But art alone has not lent enchantment to the view. It is not possible for us to comprehend, here at home, what nature is under the

"Blest power of sunshine!"

in a land where it may be truly said, on many occasions:

"There was not, on that day, a speck to stain  
The azure heaven; the blessed sun alone,  
In unapproachable divinity,  
Careered, shining in his fields of light.  
How beautiful, beneath the bright blue sky,  
The billows heave!—one glowing green expanse;  
Save where, along the bending line of shore,  
Such hue is thrown, as when the peacock's neck  
Assumes its proudest tint of amethyst  
Embathed in emerald glory."

And all this lights up a place gifted by nature with almost sublime charms. It is nature that has given the bold and varied outline,

the rocky mazes and the myrtle bowers; she it is that gives us that gigantic and overshadowing plane-tree, the growth of centuries, and the shelter of thousands of men and herds, to gaze at and admire. See the rugged oak, the spreading elm, the weeping ash, the bright sycamore, the dark-green fig, the stately cedar, the orange, the lemon, the soft acacia, the trembling aspen, the drooping willow, the sable yew, the tall poplar, and, the loftiest of all, leaving every other far beneath, the sombre cypress, rears its aspiring stem. And then, above, there is the almost bare rock, clad at times by the hardy pine of the North.

And then, besides these and many other trees, there are fruit-trees innumerable. The mulberry and the vine are the most frequent. The latter climbs about the awnings and palisades in all directions, and producing, in almost all parts of the East, a vile compound, has been the fertile source of death in our army. The shrubs are endless and innumerable; the laurel, the myrtle, the box, the arbutus, and laurastinus are everywhere to be seen. Of the flowers it would be in vain to attempt to speak.

The palaces, harems, and villas of the rich Turk—less frequent now than in Hervé's time—and of the foreign merchants, are a graceful and pleasing addition to the beauties of nature. Their gardens are perfectly fairy-like in many instances. They surround the dwellings, and then go back, getting wilder as they ascend, until they, too, reach the barren crag. There they rise, terrace after terrace, communicating by winding steps, often of marble, with beds of flowers and dark-green shrubs rising on all hands; and then the bowers, arbours, alcoves, obelisks, kiosks, pagodas, fountains, temples, awnings, lattice-worked screens and trellises.

Elsewhere upstart the blue cupolas of a mosque, half hid by an umbrageous curtain of trees, except where the fluted minarets rise alongside the dark trees. And then from some window peers a dark-eyed Greek girl, watching the boats as they pass; or an Armenian or Turkish lady darts a modest look and drops her eyes; while Turks smoke lazily near the water, boats richly carved and gilt float by, filled by men in embroidered costumes, though now, in general, the European garb is alone seen. The boatmen, however, still preserve their old dress.

Well, and with all this beauty of scenery, with such a sky, and such temptations, neither Turks, nor Greeks, nor Armenians, nor Jews, nor any other of the mixed and nondescript dwellers in Turkey have the slightest conception of art, or the slightest leaning towards a study of it. The Greeks are very behindhand. They neither comprehend music nor painting, as the daubs in the inside of their churches will readily show. As to music, some Souliots were once singing very sweetly the air of "Il Pescatore," and an American, remarked to a Greek friend how well they did it. His reply was curious. "They sing well indeed! they have some knowledge as to using their mouth, but they have no idea whatever of using their noses!" It is through the nose that the Greeks usually sing.

There have been many young Greeks sent to Europe to learn various accomplishments. Singing and painting they could never compass. We have heard Greek singing enough, and the less we hear for the future the better. What half a century of civilisation may do we know not, but the arts are nowhere in so deplorable a state as amid the ruins of temples and monuments in Greece, in Athens itself, and in the country of the Turk, where religion sets its face against every form of the art of painting and sculpture.

The prejudice is wearing away, however, and this—like everything else—denotes that there is a crisis of civilisation about to take place. The presence of the allied armies may be the cause of Turkey awaking to real civilisation, literature, and the arts, and finally to Christianity—not the Christianity of Greeks and others in Turkey, but to the purer Christianity of countries where civilisation has gone hand-in-hand with religion. Then may we hope to see even high art taking root in a country formed by nature for all that is lovely and great, and they too may produce works from which

"We gaze and turn away, and know not where,  
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart  
Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there,  
Chained to the chariot of triumphal art,  
We stand as captive, and would not depart."